



Form I-17 Accreditations and Recognitions

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See [Document Revision History](#) for complete list of revisions.

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General Questions

Q: Why does SEVP need to know the start and end dates of school accreditations and recognitions?

A: Accreditation dates help us track whether or not schools maintain ongoing accreditations and recognitions and that they remain bona fide schools.

Accreditations/Recognitions Fields

Q: Do we need to list specific departmental/area accreditations or will one regional, all-encompassing accreditation (i.e., SACS) be sufficient?

A: If your regional or national accreditation(s) covers all programs of study listed on the Form I-17, you do not need to list any additional accreditations or recognitions. However, if you have a program that is not listed under a regional or national accreditation, then you will need to list both.

Q: For clarification, do schools that offer individually accredited programs of study, such as nursing, education and business, really only have to list their overarching institutional accreditation, such as Middle States or North Central?

A: It depends on what your regional or national accreditation covers. If it covers all your programs of study, we will not require the additional information. However, if it does not cover the individual programs, you must list the additional accreditations, if you want them to be considered as accredited programs by SEVP.



Q: Must we drill down to departmental accreditations (i.e., accreditation for our school of engineering), or is this only at the institutional level?

A: If you have institutional accreditation that already covers that program, then the institutional accreditation is all that is needed.

Q: Do we need to submit school licenses for programs that are not listed on Form I-17?

A: No.

Q: Will updates to accrediting agencies require follow-up paperwork (i.e., copies of accreditation certificates)?

A: SEVP reserves the right to request supporting documentation for any change made on the Form I-17.

Q: We are a public school district; is it reasonable that we would only have the state accreditation?

A: Yes. Most public school districts would only have the state recognition, unless the state requires an additional recognition.

Q: How would a school indicate it was exempt from California Bureau of Private Post-Secondary Education state licensing, based on Western Area Schools and Colleges (WASC) accreditation?

A: On the State Recognitions, you would indicate that you are exempt. You would list the WASC accreditation in the appropriate section. You can also use the Remarks section to communicate any unusual circumstance School Certification should know about.

Q: If a school is recognized by its State Board of Education, but is not accredited, should the school select "None?"

A: A non-accredited, state-recognized school would indicate the following:

- Department of Education Recognized Agencies: "None"
- SEVP-Identified Agencies: None"
- State Recognition: Enter the state recognition

Q: How do we know that we have a complete listing of all accrediting agencies for our school?

A: You may need to check with your school administration to see if your list is complete. If you have a Department of Education Recognized Agency, a SEVP-Identified Agency, or a State-Recognized Agency you do not need to list any others. You must list all the accreditations that cover the programs of study you offer international students. If your school is institutionally accredited, and all programs are accredited under one agency, that is all that is required.

Q: If a school is exempt from licensure in the District of Columbia and indicates this, should the effective date and expiration dates be left blank?

A: Yes. You are not required to provide dates, if you indicate you are exempt from a certain type of licensure.



Q: If our Intensive English Language Program is accredited under our Department of Education Accrediting body, do we need to show specific approval for language programs?

A: Only if we request it from you. In this specific example, we would not require it. You can make note of it in the remarks if you want.

Lists of Accrediting Agencies

Q: What is the difference between Department of Education Agencies and SEVP-Identified Agencies? Should they not be the same?

A: The Department of Education list is for recognized post-secondary education accrediting agencies. The SEVP-Identified Agency list contains agencies that primarily accredit K-12 schools. SEVP recognizes these agencies for the purposes of evidentiary requirements and compliance with the regulations that govern the certification of schools with our program.

Q: What if our accrediting agency is on the Department of Education Agencies list but not on the SEVP-Identified Agencies list?

A: More than likely your agency would be only in one of them. The SEVP-Identified list applies to K-12 schools. The Department of Education list applies to post-secondary institutions.

Q: Where are the SEVP Accrediting Agencies for public universities found?

A: Most public universities are accredited by a Department of Education Recognized Agency. You are not required to have an accrediting agency from every list. It is permissible to indicate “none” for those that do not apply to your institution.

Q: Is the SEVP-Identified Agencies list only for elementary private schools?

A: Not necessarily. However, most agencies on this list primarily accredit K-12 schools.

Q: What if the agency is listed in both the Department of Education list and SEVP list? Should we list in the agency in both locations?

A: If you are a post-secondary educational institution, list it under the Department of Education Recognized Agencies. If you are a K-12, use the SEVP-Identified Agencies list.

Q: If my school is accredited by an agency on either the Department of Education Recognized Agency or the SEVP-Identified Agency lists, can I simply mark “None” in the State Recognized agency list?

A: Most schools should select an option from the State Recognized Agency drop-down list, even if it is “State: Exempt.” In rare cases would we expect a school to select “None.” In most cases, a school is either licensed by a state agency to operate as a school, or they are exempt from such licensure. If your school is not required to be licensed or registered as a school by your state, you should select the appropriate “Exempt” option. Selecting



“None” for the State Agencies list suggests that your school does not possess the required licensure from your state.

Q: One of the agencies listed as a SEVP-Identified Agency is the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). When I select it, the name has something added to the end. Can this be fixed, so I can select the correct name without the other branch agency tacked on the end of the name?

A: Southern Association of Colleges and Schools-Commission On Colleges (SACA-COC) is the correct agency to list for colleges and universities and is found under the Department of Education-recognized agencies; that is the part of SACS that is Department of Education-recognized. The other SACS constituent body (SACS-CASI) is for K-12 schools and is therefore not recognized by the Department of Education, nor appropriate for post-secondary institutions. SACS-CASI falls under AdvancED on the SEVP-identified list.

Q: My school is accredited by AdvancED. I cannot find this on the list of SEVP-Identified Accrediting Agencies. What should I do?

A: AdvancED is composed of three accreditation divisions. These three accrediting bodies appear in the list of SEVP-Identified Accrediting Agencies:

- North Central Association, Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI)/AdvancED
- Northwest Accreditation Commission (NWAC)/AdvancED
- Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI)/AdvancED

Q: I am at a high school that is accredited by Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), a Department of Education Recognized Accrediting Agency. The Department of Education drop-down list has two options for WASC – one for Community and Junior Colleges and one for Senior Colleges and Universities. Neither of these applies to my school. What should I do?

A: The Department of Education Recognized Accrediting Agencies is for post-secondary educational institutions. High schools will find an appropriate listing for WASC under the SEVP-Identified Accrediting Agencies.

Q: My school is accredited by the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS). NAIS does not appear on any of the lists. Can it be added?

A: NAIS is a membership organization and does not accredit schools. Schools are most likely accredited by another agency that does appear on the drop down lists.

Missing Accrediting Agencies

Q: What happens if the agency accrediting my school is not included on any of the drop-down lists provided?



- A: Use the Licenses and Other Recognitions section to list accrediting agencies that cover programs of study that are NOT already covered by an over-arching institutional accreditation.
- Q: Who can I contact if I believe an accrediting agency should be added to one of the drop-down lists?**
- A: If you believe an agency is missing from these lists, e-mail information about the agency to SEVISTechnicalFeedback@ice.dhs.gov. We will review the agency and, if appropriate, add it to the correct list.
- Q: The Association of Theological Schools (ATS) appears to be missing from the Department of Education list. Can it be added?**
- A: The Association of Theological Schools is listed as the Commission on Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools.

Accreditation/Recognition Dates and Alert Lists

- Q: My school was first accredited in 1912. I get an error message when I try to enter the accreditation start date in either the Department of Education or the SEVP-recognized agency lists. What should I do?**
- A: For both the Department of Education recognized and the SEVP-identified lists, SEVIS will not accept an effective date that is more than 100 years in the past. You should enter the start date for your most recent period of accreditation/re-affirmation of accreditation, not the date your school was first accredited.
- Q: If a school is accredited by a regional accrediting agency such as Middle States, what are the effective and expiration dates? The statement of accreditation does not list them. Is the expiration date the next periodic review date or the next self-study date? Is the effective date the "last reaffirmed" date?**
- A: The effective date is the "last reaffirmed" date – the date of the accreditation was most recently reaffirmed or granted. The expiration date is the date of the next periodic review.
- Q: For clarification, SEVP does not require the date of ORIGINAL accreditation which might well go back over 100 years for some schools?**
- A: Correct. If your school is accredited by an agency on either the Department of Education or the SEVP-Identified agency lists, enter the start date of your last accreditation.
- Q: My school is accredited by a State-Recognized Agency. Can I enter an effective date that is more than 100 years ago?**
- A: Yes. For State Recognized agencies, SEVIS will accept any start date going back as far as July 4, 1776.
- Q: My school is accredited by an agency I had to list in the Licenses and Other Recognitions section. Can I enter an effective date that is more than 100 years ago?**



A: Yes. For the Licenses and Other Recognitions, SEVIS will accept any start date going back as far as July 4, 1776.

Q: My school is accredited by an agency on the State-Recognized list. This accreditation does not have an expiration date. How do I indicate this?

A: The State-Recognized list allows schools to select “N/A” for the expiration date.

Q: My school is accredited by an agency I must enter on the Licenses and Other Recognitions section. This accreditation does not have an expiration date. How do I indicate this?

A: The Licenses and Other Recognitions section allows schools to select “N/A” for the expiration date.

Q: What consequences will schools face if minor accreditations expire, such as a business school accreditation, assuming the institutional accreditation is still valid? For large schools with many program or department level accreditations, this will be a challenge to manage.

A: If you have an over-arching institutional accreditation, you are not required to list individual departmental accreditations. However if you list departmental accrediting agencies and they expire, they do not affect your eligibility to be an SEVP-certified school.

Q: Once we enter our expiration dates for regional accreditation, and come to that date (i.e., March 2016), what will happen? Will there be a problem with our Form I-17 once that date has passed?

A: You are required to keep the information updated, just as you do now. If you are in the middle of a re-accreditation process, and are still in good standing with the accrediting agency, you would e-mail update.sevis@ice.dhs.gov to notify them that you have an expiring accreditation, but that you are in the middle of a review.

Q: Are schools expected to continually update accreditation expiration dates on the Form I-17?

A: Yes. You will be expected to update the dates.

Q: My institution is affiliated with another university and now we are accredited under their regional agency. Our programs are SEVP-approved, theirs are not. What accreditation dates should we use; since they began to be accredited or since we affiliated with them?

A: You would put in the date that your school was authorized under their accreditation.

Q: My accrediting agency only lists the years of validity and does not give specific dates for the start and end of my school's accreditation. How should I record this in SEVIS?

A: Schools should always seek guidance from their accreditor regarding the full scope of their accreditation cycle. If your accreditor does not have a specific accreditation expiration or reaffirmation date for your school, you may list a general end date, which



encompasses, but does not exceed, your current accreditation cycle. For example, if your school's accreditation was last renewed on 9/1/2005, and accreditation is granted for a 10 year period, you should list 9/1/2015 as the expiration date.

Q: My school is accredited by an agency that only gives the month and the year for the accreditation start and end dates. How should we list these?

A: For the accreditation start date, list the first day of the month that the accreditation took effect. For the expiration date, list the last day of the month the accreditation is in effect. For example if your school is accredited April 2010 through March 2020, list this as 04/01/2010 through 03/31/2020.

Q: My school is in the re-accreditation process now. We have had the site visit, but do not know when we will get the official reaffirmation of our accreditation. Our period of accreditation ends soon. How should we update the Form I-17?

A: Consult with your accrediting agency to find out when they will meet to make a decision on your school's accreditation. Use that month to define the expiration of your current accreditation. For example, if they do not meet until December 2014, enter December 31, 2014 as the expiration; and then explain your situation in the Accreditation Remarks field.

Multiple Campuses/Accreditations

Q: How does the accreditation information affect a school that has one Form I-17, but two campuses?

A: The accreditation information listed on the Form I-17 applies to all campuses.

Q: We have a school system with five locations – two are accredited with Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and have accreditation dates of 4/23/2014 – 4/30/2015 and 7/8/2013- 7/30/2014. The other three are accredited with Florida Catholic Conference Accreditation Program (FCCAP) and have accreditation expiration dates of 5/7/2013-5/7/2016, 8/9/2012-8/9/2015, and 1/30/2014-1/30/2017. How should I record this?

A: From the drop-down list, select both SACS and FCCAP – for the start and expiration dates, choose the 4/23/2014 to 4/30/2015 period for SACS and the 1/30/2014 to 1/30/2017 period for FCCAP. You would not need to update this information until the listed expiration date, unless SEVP requests an earlier change to the date. To indicate which schools are accredited by which accrediting agency, in the Optional Accreditation comments you would list the three-digit school suffix next to the agency (SACS – 000 and 002 FCCAP 001,003, and 004). Example:



*** Accreditations and Recognitions**
Enter a choice for each option. **None** is acceptable. Depending on your responses, **Not Required** may be an option. This means your school may have these types of recognitions but you can c
Required instead of listing all of them. See Help for more details.

Department of Education Recognized Accrediting Agencies ☒ **None**

SEVP Identified Accrediting Agencies

04/23/2014 - 04/30/2015 Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI)
 01/30/2014 - 01/30/2017 Florida Catholic Conference Accreditation Program (FCCAP)

State Recognitions ☒ **None**

Licenses and Other Recognitions ☒ **None** ☐ **Not Required** Add only if not covered by institutional or other accreditation but required for your school to operate and/or licenses, certifications or degrees.

Optional Accreditation Comments
SACS - 000 and 002
FCCAP - 001,003, and 004

Q: For clarification, where do I find the three-digit campus extension code referenced in the instruction above?

A: You can find the three-digit suffix on the **Record of School/Campuses** section of the printed Form I-17.

1. School or Campus Name: Main Campus	2. School or Campus 3-digit suffix: 000
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Q: We are a school with multiple accreditations, because we have campuses in multiple states. Should we list all accrediting bodies for all of our campus locations or only those for the campuses where we have a PDSO or DSO?

A: By default, all campuses on a Form I-17 have a PDSO. Since you have multiple state recognitions, the format will allow you to list the state recognitions for each campus. You can list as many agencies as you need.

Q: We have 37 campuses; they all have one common SEVP-Identified Accrediting Agency. However, some of the campuses are also accredited by additional agencies that are also on the list. How do we handle this?

A: If the accreditation from an SEVP-Identified Accrediting Agency covers all the program of study, you have the option to list the accrediting agencies that accredited those campuses. However, if the program of study offered at those campuses is accredited only by the other accrediting agency, you must list that agency.

Q: The 31 institutions in the MnSCU system are exempt from licensing through the Minnesota Office of Higher Education. So we would select the Minnesota Exempt selection under State Agencies on the Accreditations Worksheet — right?

A: Correct.

FAA Certification

Q: What is FAA Certification?

A: Federal Aviation Agency (FAA) Certification is given to schools that offer flight training. SEVP requires FAA Certification Part 141 or Part 142 for any school that trains pilots.

Q: My school does not offer flight training. How do I complete the FAA Certification section?



- A: If you do not have a flight training program, you would indicate “None.”
- Q: My school has FAA Part 147 certification, but not Part 141 or 142. How do I complete the Form I-17?**
- A: List FAA Part 147 under Licenses and Other recognitions and provide a brief explanation in the Accreditation Remarks field.
- Q: My school has FAA Part 142 certification. This does not have an expiration date. SEVIS requires an expiration date, what should I do?**
- A: Until the expiration date field is removed for Part 142 certification, schools must enter a date in this field. Enter an arbitrary expiration date that is no more than 100 years into the future.

Post-Submission Conversion Issues

- Q: Will future updates to accreditation dates lock the Form I-17 and prevent us from updating critical information, such as programs of study or adding a DSO?**
- A: Yes.
- Q: How do I know if the accreditation conversion was submitted properly?**
- A: Review the list of accreditations noted on your SEVIS School Information page. It should contain all over-arching institutional accreditations. It should also list all additional accreditations or recognitions needed to cover programs of study not covered by over-arching institutional accreditations.
- Q: What should I do if I made a mistake when submitting the conversion information?**
- A: Schools can correct the accreditation and state recognition information on the Form I-17 by submitting a petition update to SEVIS Fields #10 and #11. Updates to these fields require adjudication; therefore, schools should be prepared to provide supporting evidence, if requested.

If your school has a pending recertification or update, submit your corrections after adjudication of the pending petitions, unless requested otherwise by an SEVP Adjudicator. Schools applying for initial certification must contact the School Certification Unit at schoolcert.sevis@ice.dhs.gov, if you need to correct the accreditation and state recognition information on the Form I-17 petition.

Note: It is not necessary to submit a printed Form I-17 at the time of submission.

Resources

- Q: What resources does SEVP have to help schools determine how to list school accreditations and recognitions on the Form I-17 properly?**
- A: The following tools are available on [Study in the States](#):



- [Accreditations FAQ](#)
- [Accreditations Job Aid](#)
- [Accreditations Worksheet](#)

Document Revision History

DATE	REVISION
September 8, 2014	Initial release